

[Mr. and Mrs. Douglas]

Week [(17)?] Item (32)

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

NAME OF WORKER Bessie Jollensten ADDRESS Ogallala, Nebraska

DATE April 20, 1939 SUBJECT Mr and Mrs Charles Douglas [Brule?].

1. Name and address of informant Mabel Douglas, Brule, Nebraska.
2. Date and time of interview Thursday April 6th, 1939. 1:p.m.
3. Place of interview In Mrs Douglas's home 5 miles south west of Brule.
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant

No one But Mr Douglas was there most of the time during the interview.

5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you

No One.

6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

In Her east dinning room, just off the hall from the kitchen.

Week [(17)?] Item (32)

FORM B Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER Bessie Jollensten ADDRESS Ogallala, Nebraska.

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DATE April 20, 1939 SUBJECT Mr and Mrs Charles Douglas, Brule, Neb.

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Mrs Mabel Douglas, Brule, Nebraska.

1. Ancestry Her Father was born in Ohio. Mother Born in Iowa....
2. Place and date of birth May [17th?] 1879, at [Osscola?] Polk Co. Nebr.
3. Family Seven children.
4. Place lived in, with dates Here for 37 years on the same place. Three and one half miles [so.?] of Brule.
5. Education, with dates Reared and educated in Polk Co. in the rural schools.
6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates Farmers wife.
Home making, gardening, and Chicken raiseing.
7. Special skills and interests Sewing, [h?]
8. Community and religious activities Belong to the Christian Church.
9. Description of informant Very cautious and Obbliging.
10. Other points gained in interview Very particular about giving the Truth, and if she does not know she Looks it up about the dates.

Week (17) Item [(32)?]

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

NAME OF WORKER Bessie Jollensten ADDRESS Ogallala, Nebraska.

Library of Congress

DATE April 20, 1939 SUBJECT Mr and Mrs Charles Douglas Brule, Nebr.

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Mrs Mable Douglas, Brule, Nebraska.

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Bessie Jollensten...

Ogallala, Nebraska.

Mr and Mrs Charles Douglas, Brule, Nebraska...

Charles Douglas was born June 6, 1874 at Shellsberg Iowa, coming to Neb. in 1880 as a small Boy with his parents. They first settled at Strawnsberg Pook Co. There there was some homestead land to be taken at that time. But Father was disgusted with the conditions there at that time and decided he would not take that land as a gift. However this same land sold in later years for \$150. per acre. He also had another chance to trade an old horse for another quarter section of laand, but at that ti time he would not have traded the horse for six sections of land, this land also sold for \$150. per acre at many years after it was [proved upon?]. But the People just did not have the money to spare at that time. When they worked they received \$.50 per day, there was no machinery to speak of at that time and if [somethingmbroke??] on what we did broke, we did not crawl up in the shade untill it was fixed, we did all we could to help repair it, or found something else to do until it was done.

I worked at one place for three years, receiving \$20. per month we worked from four in the morning until nine at night, and we thought we were making money. I had to helk support the family, as long as I was at home, got to go to school a month or so in the winter.

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We came to Dawson Co. 1815 and to Keith co in 1888 where we homesteaded and filed on a [Trmeslain?].

We tried in vain to get some of our people from back east to come out and take land, but they had heard so much of the Indians, Cow Boys, and What a great Desert, Western Nebraska was etc. they seemed to think that was all there was here, and would not come. But finally we did con one uncle, Levi [Smelsen?] or rather induced him to come. He had been through here with a wagon train in the earlier days. During the year 1853 with the California[?] Gold Seeker Seeker's On their way out to California they had camped near the present site of Brule for a few days. He related a story asto what happened while they were camped there, he and two, others, 2 desiced to see what was on the other side of the Hill. On reaching the o other side i the hill they were greeted with one of the most promising countries they had ever seen, a broad level expanse of land, beautiful to behold. when they finally started back to the wagon train there came such a dense fogg they could not see where to go, directly they became confused as to which way to go, but Uncle having lived in the timber country most of his life, had been accustomed to finding his way out of such places. He had noticed which cheek the wind struck him on as they had started out also he was guided by the north star which they could see a little at time suddenly the other two fellows were so convinced they were going the wrong that they turned and went the other way, but Uncle did not pay any attention to them, finally they began to whistle at him, and came back to the direction he was going, they had only went a short distance when they tumbled down a small bank, and when they looked around a little they saw the, reflection of the camp only a couple of hundred yards away. they told the rest of the people what a wonderful country they had saw, and they were very much surprised to know there was such a wonderful country in the world.

While yet a young man Mr Douglas was Married to Miss Mabel Gray of Duel who was born in Oseola, Polk County. She had came to Keith County with her people in March 1886, and were here in time to witness the big Blizzard, of 1886. She also remembers of her

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Father tying a rope to the door knob when he went down to the barn, so he could find his way back to the house. But Why Her people brought a baseburner, and a gasoline range with them is more than she can tell, as they could neither buy gasoline, or hard coal and could burn prairie fuel in neither of them. They had burned some cornstalks in Polk Co. but there was no corn raised here at the time. When her mother made vinegar [piace?], or rice they thought they had a real fed feed There were no bridges, at that time between Big Springs Sidney and North Platte, says they crossed the river on the ice, Jewlsberg at that time was called, Denver junction, and was farther west than the present site of Jewlsberg. [Colorado.?)

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We had a little sod schoolhouse for the first term, no floor, and no desks, and those who had an extra chair at home could bring them, for seats, and the rest sat on boxes. The blackboard was made out of three twelve in. bo boards of pine, nailed together and painted black. One day in may someone looked up and saw a big bull-snake crawling across the ledge of the door. Of course that frightened the schollars, to say nothing of the [teacher?] For entertainment one of the neighbors brought an old organ to the schoolhouse and we practiced singing, and had literaries, basket suppers, pie socials, spelling bees etc. Mrs douglas was going to school when one set of the [Reikat?] tripletsre Triplets were born. in 1890.

When Mr Levi Smelser was on his trip to California the wagon train camped for several days at Chimney rock, for about aweek. One night it was so dark they could not see your hand before you, and it just poured down rain all night. The Indians[,?] were camped near them[,?] and they could hear them all night, having some sort of a pow-wow.

Uncle said they Put all the wagons in a circle and kept the stock in side that to keep the Indians from taking them, then the men would take turns at watching all night.

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Mr and Mrs Chas. Douglas have six children, Coral More at Detroit, Mich., Lee Douglas Brule, Neb., Mrs Opal McKeen Lincoln Neb. Mrs Dorothy Ramsey of Brule, Mrs Frank McKeeney of Detroit, Mich., Paul of Detroit, and Elanor, still at home with her parents, at Brule, Nebraska.